

Community Connections: Essential to a Sustainable Library



Libraries have long been committed to building healthy, thriving communities, but they are now seeing an increased need to create and build strategic partnerships and expand relationships with the larger community.

To sustain your library's effort and have the broadest possible impact, partner with community organizations and agencies that have common or complementary goals.

This is what we call **Community Connections**. When the library builds community connections it strengthens its ties to the community, with benefits in these 4 categories:

- **RESOURCES:** Enables sharing of resources, assets, grants, information and connections.
 - Accomplish more together.
 - Share and maximize resources and reduce cost.
 - Learn from each other.
 - Establishes relationships that lead to further partnerships.
- **IMPACT:** Broadens the impact of the library on the community.
 - Attracts new community members to the library & reaches people who would not usually come.
 - Has more success with the programs it provides.
 - Creates new resources for those they serve.
- **VALUE:** Creates awareness of the unique value of the library.
 - Builds positive relationships with diverse stakeholders.
 - Establishes the library as a vital part of community life.
 - Creates positive publicity for the library.
 - Increases each organization's profile and visibility.
- **EFFECTIVENESS:** Designing programming with community experts who are already charged to serve this target group, gives your efforts a boost and increases the likelihood of success. Programs created in a vacuum frequently fail.
 - It is a great way to reach people in your community.
 - Builds on strengths the library already has.
 - Programs have a built-in audience.